

CARLSBAD AVENUES

Let's talk about **LIVABLE COMMUNITIES**

At the turn of this century, the focus of the Carlsbad City Council, and of many forward-looking cities across America, was, ironically, on the turn of the previous century. In those “good old days,” communities were pedestrian-oriented, the diversity of architectural elements on a block was pleasing to the eye, and the design of homes and neighborhoods encouraged interaction among neighbors.

As the decades rolled on, the booming popularity of the

- automobile resulted in wide streets designed more for vehicles than pedestrians, in homes that sometimes boasted as many garages as bedrooms, and in suburbs where folks didn't have time to congregate with their neighbors because they were driving long, grueling miles to and from work.

Today, the Carlsbad City Council and staff are striving to restore what has been lost. The concept is called “livability.” Creating livable communities that enhance our quality of life is the goal.

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Livable communities promote a cozy atmosphere

Much of the residential development that has occurred in Carlsbad over the past several decades – especially considering the growth of open space within planned developments and throughout the city – has been a boon to residents and the community. Yet, some tangible and intangible qualities have gone the way of the horse and buggy.

After scrutinizing the residential development already in place throughout the city, the City Council pondered how to enhance the development of the remaining undeveloped areas of the City. The answer was to make communities more “livable,” a regional and national trend that is sparking exciting results and kudos from all concerned.

In 2001, Carlsbad became one of the first cities in San Diego County to create formal policies and a comprehensive program addressing livable streets and neighborhoods.

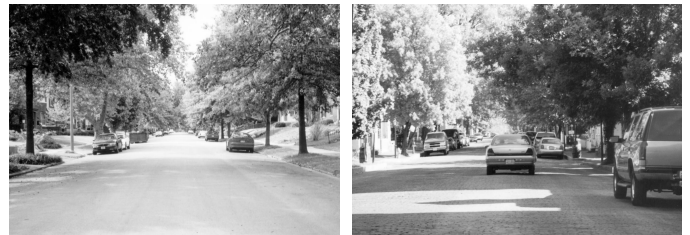
What will increased livability provide? A new level of neighborhood that is attractive, safe and inviting

- Communities will be more pedestrian-oriented and safer, encouraging less dependence on automobiles.
- Accessibility of emergency service vehicles will improve, as will the ability of residents to evacuate in a timely manner during a major emergency.
- More opportunities for interaction among neighbors.
- An interesting and diverse, human-oriented architecture that will be more appealing to residents and the general public.

How will livable communities be achieved?

Four components have been put in place, most of which are applicable to all new residential subdivisions. These are: Livable Streets, Traffic Calming, Planned Development and Neighborhood Design Standards. Each component will make a striking difference in the future of new, and in some cases existing, communities. Together, all of them will change the landscape of Carlsbad in a significant, beneficial way.

Which street is wider?



They're exactly the same width. The friendly encroachment of trees makes the street on the right feel more narrow and cozy, and it also slows down traffic.

LIVABLE STREETS

- Narrow streets are theoretically safer and more aesthetically pleasing as well.
- New streets will be 34 feet wide, reduced from the old standard of 40 feet.
- On the 13 feet between the face of the curb and the homeowner's property line, a 7.5-foot parkway with a tree will be adjacent to the curb, with a 5.0-foot sidewalk six inches from the property line. Previously, the sidewalk was next to the curb, parkways did not exist, and trees were planted on the homeowner's property.
- The trees will make an attractive canopy over the street. The effect of the greenery, coupled with the narrower street width, should encourage motorists to drive more slowly – and safely – through the neighborhood.

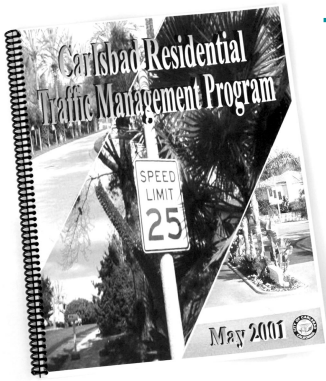


According to recent research conducted in California's Central Valley, a narrow, tree-lined street is 10 degrees cooler than a wide, unshaded street, helping residents save 15% or more on air conditioning costs.



Informed Involvement Is Our Goal.

AVENUES publications are created by the City of Carlsbad to communicate why things are the way they are today ... and to explain how you can help direct their progress in the future.



TRAFFIC CALMING

Along with addressing traffic issues in new neighborhoods, Carlsbad's Residential Traffic Management Program is designed to make streets in existing neighborhoods safer for pedestrians and children. When motorists cut quickly through residential streets to escape traffic on major thoroughfares, it disturbs tranquility and decreases safety.

In response to the twin problems of high volumes and excessive speeds in neighborhoods, the City Council, which was cognizant of the new engineering approach called traffic calming, elected to obtain solid citizen input before proceeding. It appointed a seven-person committee to work with traffic engineering staff to develop solutions for Carlsbad neighborhoods seriously affected by traffic problems.

The committee worked diligently for almost one year to develop a three-phase approach to meet its three objectives.

The objectives ...

- To obtain support of the residents in any neighborhood needing traffic calming.
- To make sure any measures implemented meet the approval of emergency agencies concerned about response times and of utilities whose large vehicles could be adversely affected or damaged by the measures.
- To ensure that residents will be willing to live with the traffic calming measures for the future.

The phases ...

- The first phase of the program is designed to investigate problems and involve the neighborhood.
- The second phase is devoted to studying the specific traffic problems in a neighborhood and to designing measures needed to solve those problems, ranking them by priority.
- The third phase, which involves allocation of funds, begins with the permanent installation of the specific traffic calming measure and culminates with the monitoring of the program for effectiveness.

The program can be customized to fit the needs of the neighborhood

- The transportation division has a big toolbox of traffic calming approaches, including but not limited to speed monitoring, traditional police enforcement, medians and entry/raised islands.
- If a majority of homeowners on a street desire a traffic calming program, a temporary tool can be put in place to determine viability before a permanent solution is installed.

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Approved by the City Council in 2001, this ordinance, by changing previous development standards, will make an extraordinary difference in the "people friendliness" of tomorrow's communities. The ordinance ...

- Doubles the outdoor passive meeting, active recreation and neighborhood gathering space within the entire project.
- Increases the minimum size of each home's backyard.
- Requires a home's interior square footage to be proportional to the size of the lot.
- Greatly reduces and discourages "snout house" design where multiple-car garages take visual precedence over the home.
- Private, gated communities are discouraged. Cumbersome cul-de-sacs will give way to interconnected grids that are easier to navigate and much safer in times of an emergency.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN STANDARDS

Architects and designers are enthusiastic promoters of the "neo-traditional" approach that is intended to encourage friendliness, open the homes to the neighborhood and the neighborhood to the world at large.

- Variations in height (e.g., one- and two-stories), in style (e.g., porches) and in plane (e.g., recessed windows) will create a street that invites pedestrians to walk down, look around and chat with their neighbors.
- Home entrances that are easily visible from the street will add to the appealing atmosphere.

Further Information and Involvement

If you would like further information on circulation and related topics, we invite you to:

- Contact the Planning Department at 602-4600. For traffic calming issues, call Deputy City Engineer Bob Johnson at 602-2752.
- Review a copy of the Planned Development Ordinance Amendment to the General Plan and the Carlsbad Residential Traffic Management Program at the Faraday Center.
- Visit the City's website at www.ci.carlsbad.ca.us.

If you would like to observe and/or participate in the planning process, we invite you to:

- Attend a Planning Commission meeting, generally held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 6 pm in the Council Chambers, 1200 Carlsbad Village Drive.
- Learn about applying for membership on the Planning Commission or other volunteer advisory boards and commissions by calling the City Clerk at 434-2808.
- Attend a regularly scheduled City Council meeting, generally held on Tuesdays at 6 pm in the Council Chambers, 1200 Carlsbad Village Drive.
- Call 434-2820 to confirm above dates and times and to get more information on how you can help direct the avenues of your City's policies and programs.

